R E M A R K S

Claims **4-10, 13-14, 16-17, 21-24** and **26-27** have been amended to refer to only one preceding claim. Each of the dependent claims, as amended, now depends on only one preceding claim. Therefore no additional fee is required for multiple dependency.

Prompt, favorable action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP

By ______________________

Richard M. Beck, Reg.# 22,580
P.O. Box 2207
Wilmington, Delaware 19801
(302) 888-6235
Attorney for Applicants

RMB/alh
(5587*319)

-- 4. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, characterized in that a fluid with a specific weight which differs from that of the first material component is used as the washing fluid.

5. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 4] claim 1, characterized in that, in the case of sedimentation chambers (12) arranged in cascade one above the other, the material to be separated is introduced into the container at an upper sedimentation chamber (12), upstream in the sedimentation direction, and the washing fluid is introduced into the container at a lower sedimentation chamber (12), downstream in the sedimentation direction, and in that, after flowing through the sediment film at the lower sedimentation chamber (12), the washing fluid subsequently flows against the sedimentation direction to the sediment film of the sedimentation chamber (12) above.

6. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 5] claim 1, characterized in that the material with the enriched first material component is evacuated at one end of the container (10) and in that the washing fluid is evacuated with the second material component at an opposite end of the container (10).

7. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 6] claim 1, characterized in that the material enriched with the first material component flows through an annular opening (16) in the base (14) and, in the process, an annular closed sediment film is formed, and in that the washing fluid flows through the annular closed sediment film from the outside to the inside or from the inside to the outside.

8. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 7] claim 1, characterized in that kinetic energy is specifically introduced by means of a motive element in the container (10), in particular in the region of the sedimentation zone.

-- 9. The method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 8] claim 1, characterized in that a sedimentation direction, in which the sediment film flows, extends in the same direction or opposite to a gravitational direction of the gravitational field.

10. An appliance for material separation, in particular for carrying out the method as claimed in [one of claims 1 to 9] claim 1, having a container (10), which comprises at least one sedimentation chamber (12) for accepting and sedimenting a material, which is bounded at one end by a base (14) which has an opening (16) for evacuating a sedimented material, a flow device for supplying a washing fluid being provided in the container (10), characterized in that
- the opening (16) in the base (14) of the sedimentation chamber (12) is configured as a gap by means of which a continuous sediment film can be generated during the evacuation of the sedimented material, and
- the flow device comprises at least one duct (18, 20), which is arranged in a region of the outlet of the sediment film from the gap and is configured for the approach flow of the washing fluid through the sediment film.

13. The appliance as claimed in claim 11 [or 12], characterized in that an outer duct (18) is configured as an annular feed duct and surrounds the annular sediment film, and in that an inner duct (20) is arranged as evacuation duct within the annular sediment film and is configured for evacuating the washing fluid which flows through the sediment film.

14. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 13] claim 10, characterized in that a plurality of sedimentation chambers (12) are arranged in cascade one above the other in a container (10).

16. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 15] claim 10, characterized in that the base (14) of the sedimentation chamber (12) is configured as a funnel shape toward the gap (16).

-- 17. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 16] claim 10, characterized in that the sedimentation chamber (12) has a rotationally symmetrical configuration relative to a center line, and in that the sedimentation chamber (12) has at least two annular wall elements (22, 25; 24, 28), of which at least one wall element (22; 25, 28) is configured conically relative to the center line.

21. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 18 to 20] claim 18, characterized in that the stand (26) can be displaced axially.

22. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 18 to 21] claim 18, characterized in that the stand (26) is hollow and is configured with penetrations (30) for guiding the washing fluid within the stand (26).

23. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 22] claim 10, characterized in that the container (10) has an essentially cylindrical configuration relative to a center line.

24. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 23] claim 10, characterized in that a base region (32) of the container (10) has a conical configuration and is provided with a central drain (34) and an annular feed (36) for the washing fluid.

26. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 25] claim 10, characterized in that a plurality of containers (10) are connected in parallel and/or in series.

27. The appliance as claimed in [one of claims 10 to 26] claim 10, characterized in that the gap is configured between two boundary walls (52, 54), of which a first boundary wall (52) is longer than the second boundary wall (54). --